A Community Water Watch Update

The Newsletter for the Monroe County Community Water Watch Program

Autumn/Winter 2003

Volunteers Enjoy Use of Learning Lab

CWW Trainer Joe Gorsuch assists CWW Volunteer Ann Jones identify benthic macroinvertebrates using the technology at Parkland School.

The Community Water Watch (CWW) volunteers, trainers, and staff would like to express their thanks to Nick Garbowski and the Greece Central School District for welcoming us to their technology lab at the Parkland Elementary School for a CWW training session. Participants were able to use the computers and microscopes that make up this fantastic laboratory to closely examine and identify benthic macroinvertebrates.

The December training session was the continuation of a partnership between CWW and Parkland that began in the spring when the students "adopted" nearby Paddy Hill

(Continued on page 2)

New Stormwater Monitoring Program Underway

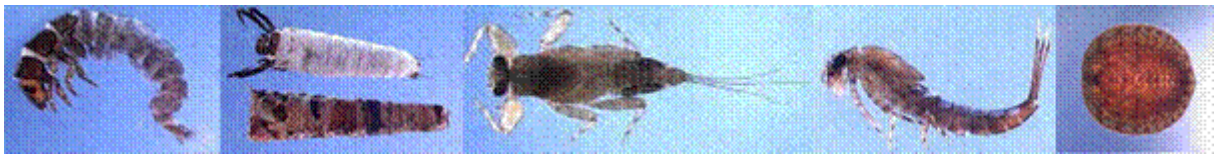
On "Make A Difference Day" (October 25, 2003), a group of hardy volunteers braved the cold and rain to launch our new stormwater outfall monitoring program in the Village of Spencerport. The Earth Girls, Village Mayor Ted Walker, the Community Water Watch (CWW) staff, and several residents and guests gathered to finalize the details of this exciting new program.

The Earth Girls shared their knowledge of how stormwater impacts water quality.

Residents will monitor their adopted outfall on a bi-monthly basis and complete a data card in order to document any pollution. The volunteers will submit their data cards to the CWW staff who will follow up with the Village to investigate any problems that are discovered.

The program will help the Village comply

(Continued on page 2)



(Continued from page 1)

Creek. Every student in the school visited the Creek, learned about watersheds, and identified macroinvertebrates using the technology lab.

Looking toward the future, Nick is exploring opportunities to create an "indoor stream" that would result in even more opportunities for the students to interact with and learn about our natural environment.

CWW Trainer Gary Neuderfer helps Louise Hartshorn and Terry McEntee identify their benthic macroinvertebrates.

(Continued from page 1)

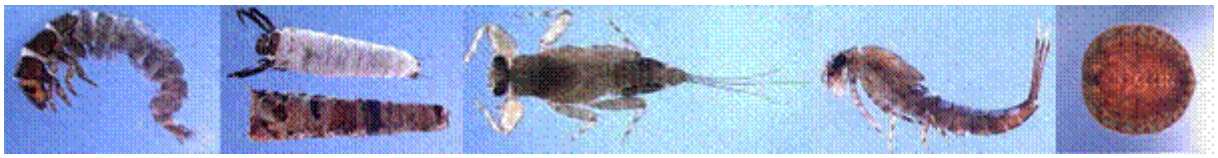
with new federal stormwater regulations. As the pilot project with Spencerport progresses and we gain experience, we will expand the program to other towns and villages in the County, many of whom have already expressed interest.

We are also coordinating with the Rochester Pure Waters District (RPWD) which is launching a similar effort in those areas of the City of Rochester with separate storm sewers. The RPWD is using professional staff to conduct its monitoring because many of the outfalls under its jurisdiction are located in industrial or difficult to access areas. However, in those areas where it is possible to use volunteers, the RPWD will be working with the CWW program to recruit and coordinate volunteers.

Following the kick-off event for the pilot project, Kimie Romeo, our Volunteer

Coordinator, went door to door in the Village recruiting additional volunteers and checking out the outfalls that need monitoring. Many of the outfalls provided reminders of why so much attention is now being directed at stormwater as a major source of water pollution. Kimie discovered several outfalls discharging litter or other pollutants. These are common problems that are often caused by stormwater runoff picking up litter, salt, sediments, motor oil, or other automotive fluids from parking lots and roadways and transporting them to the creek via the stormwater system. However, on occasion, these problems may be caused by a home or business that is illegally discharging its sanitary waste to the stormwater system.

As our pilot project with the Village of Spencerport moves forward, we will keep you informed. When the program is expanded throughout the County, we hope you will consider joining us in working to reduce stormwater pollution. For additional information please contact Kimie Romeo at 703-4690 or Todd Stevenson at 274-7638.



Long-Time Community Water Watch Trainer Receives Honor

Joseph Gorsuch, Manager of Environmental Studies for Eastman Kodak Company and long-time Community Water Watch (CWW) trainer, was recently honored with the 2003 Herb Ward Exceptional Service Award from the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry.

Joe teaches CWW participants how to collect benthic macroinvertebrate samples.

Joe's contributions to community environmental education were key to his selection for the award. For 11 years, Joe coordinated the Kodak-Rochester City School District "Adopt-A-Stream Program" that encouraged careers in science. Since 1998, Joe has shared his knowledge of benthic macroinvertebrates and water quality with us as a trainer for the CWW program.

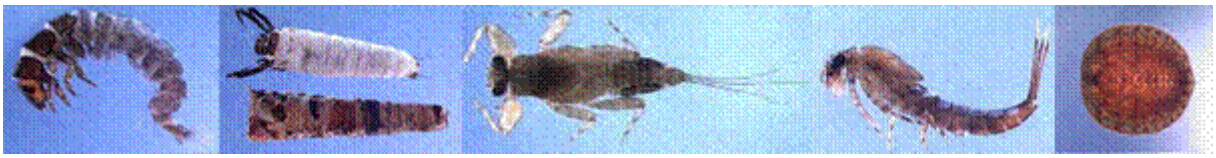
We would like to offer our special thanks to Joe for all his contributions to the community and congratulations for this well-deserved award.

The Winter Stream

There is a wonderful feeling of adventure accompanying winter stream monitoring. Snow swirls in the air, covering the trees and the ground. Cold, brisk winds create a peaceful and quiet atmosphere unlike any other time of year. Dressing in layers and carrying all the appropriate gear and snacks coupled with a hike in to the stream adds to the expedition like feel. But here a few important things to consider before you head out.

- Ice accumulation along the edge of a river is called shelf ice. Be careful when walking on shelf ice. Be sure you know the area very well and you are sure of the depth under the ice before stepping on to shelf ice.
- Polarized sunglasses can be a good idea. They allow you to see into the water to identify changes in depth and subsurface obstacles that could potentially cause a fall.
- Good blood circulation through your feet will help keep them warm. Remember, this means wearing too many socks can cause your feet to become cold.
- The aquatic macroinvertebrate species that we encounter here in New York can be divided into two subsets based on their period of major growth and activity. The first group consists of species with their principal larval growth during the fall, winter, and spring and then emerge during spring or early summer. The other group is comprised of species with their principal larval growth and adult emergence

(Continued on page 4)



(Continued from page 3)

during late summer to fall. Adults and larvae of various species can be found throughout the spring, summer and fall. The adults of some species move from shallow bodies of water in the fall to deeper ones where they remain active all winter long under the ice. Still others might burrow deep into the sediment of the stream bed during colder winter months. Therefore, your PMA count may indicate slightly more impact during the winter months. However, keep in mind that the visual survey and the trip to your stream are always valuable activities. If you have any questions regarding winter stream monitoring please contact Kimie Romeo at 703-4690.

Who Am I???

Our volunteers are becoming so good at identification that we no longer include a picture of the "mystery macroinvertebrate." Be among the first three volunteers to call in with the correct identification and win a prize!

As an adult:

- I congregate in schools.
- I can be found nearer to the surface of the water.
- I get oxygen from the atmosphere.
- I am considered both a predator and a scavenger.
- I have two pair of eyes to see above and below the water's surface.
- I have a type of "radar" to locate objects (food) in the water.
- I can secrete a white odorous substance to deter my predators.

Who am I? Contact Kimie Romeo at 703-4690 with your answer.

Students and guests use technology at the Parkland School in Greece to identify benthic macroinvertebrates collected from a nearby stream.

The Ogden Conservation Board is keeping an eye on Salmon Creek.